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TAGS: [PREL](#) [PTER](#) [KPAL](#) [EFIN](#) [IS](#) [EG](#)

SUBJECT: THWARTING HAMAS CASH TRANSFERS THROUGH RAFAH

REF: A. CAIRO 6910
[B.](#) CAIRO 6936
[C.](#) CAIRO 7012
[D.](#) STATE 196700

Classified By: Ambassador Francis J. Ricciardone for reasons
1.4(b) and (d).

[¶](#)1. (S) Foreign Minister Aboul Gheit told the Ambassador on December 12 that Egypt "had taken a decision" and is striving to find a legal mechanism to stop Hamas officials from taking cash through Egypt into Gaza. Finance Minister Youssef Boutros Ghali reportedly has "found one bank" in which the GOE would oblige Gaza travelers to deposit their money for later transfer, "which we would obstruct." He said Egypt has already told Haniyeh's delegation that if they arrive in Egypt with money, they will be blocked from taking it to Gaza. Aboul Gheit indicated that the Central Bank and Egyptian General Intelligence Service are also involved in the Finance Ministry's effort.

[¶](#)2. (S) So far, Minister of Finance Youssef Boutros Ghali has been unreachable for confirmation. EGIS Chief Soliman, however, offered little hope that the GOE would impose the bank deposit requirement on Haniyeh's imminently expected transit from Khartoum, probably directly by private aircraft to Arish. Meeting with the Ambassador later the same day, Interior Minister Adly spoke vehemently against Hamas, as an offshoot of the Muslim Brotherhood, and expressed his eagerness to relieve them of their money if the GOE could find a legal means to do so -- while otherwise freely permitting Arab travelers to bring cash into Egypt for legitimate investments.

RICCIARDONE